

Selichot B'Yachad

Conversation Starter | A Guide

Part 1: Introduction

What's Selichot B'Yachad?

Amidst the challenging times we are all facing, the High Holy Days will be, totally or partially, a virtual gathering and experience. Congregations around the world are preparing for different offerings, prayers, experiences, and collaborations in necessarily creative ways.

Selichot B'Yachad is a video experience that brings together Rabbis, Cantors, musicians and individuals from 30 different countries to affirm, through their diversity and uniqueness, the spirituality of this year's High Holy Days. Whoever you are, whatever language you speak, and wherever you are, this program is for you.

How can individuals and congregations use our content?

The Selichot B'Yachad video is designed to be viewed by individuals or by groups. The video itself presents reflections and insights about Selichot, forgiveness, and the spiritual meaning of the High Holy Days by leading rabbinic figures from our Global Movement. Their divrei torah are meant to inspire and engage viewers.

Additionally, we have produced Companion Guides (in several languages) with leading questions to think about or discuss after the program as part of a group 'watch party'. The video can be stopped by hosts at specific points to amplify ideas for discussion.

Musical excerpts of Hatishma Koli and Avinu Malkeinu, sung by moving cantors and song leaders from more than 20 countries, can be downloaded as separate files for integration into your congregation's online services for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur.

Selichot, and the intention of asking for forgiveness and reflecting on the past year, is a relevant process and exploration starting in the month of Elul, through Rosh Hashana, the ten holy days leading up to Yom Kippur, and Yom Kippur.

We welcome Rabbis, congregational leaders, youth movement workers and madrichim, cantors, and individuals to view and share the experience we have created.

The Selichot B'Yachad video includes:



The Shofar Awakens You

We asked rabbis and lay leaders from our Global Movement: what does hearing the sound of the shofar mean to you?



Hatishma Koli

A song for meditation and silent prayer. To be sung before or after a sermon during High Holy Day services, often following the emotional prayer "Sh'ma Koleinu" (Hear our Voices).



Divrei Torah

By Rabbi Rick Jacobs (US), Rabbi Alona Lisitsa (Israel), Rabbi Professor Dalia Marx (Israel) and Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur (France).



Avinu Malkenu

A liturgical prayer sung by an ensemble of cantors and songleaders from our Global Movement.

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All participants speak in their native languages, but the program has English subtitles.

Who created Selichot B'Yachad?

Selichot B'Yachad was conceived and created collaboratively by the WUPJ and the WZO - Department of Diaspora Affairs. We are grateful to the many organizations' leaders, volunteers, Rabbis, Cantors, and individuals, who contributed to the experience with their inspiring words and music.

Part 2: Guiding Questions or Conversation Starters

The questions below are designed to be addressed by individuals or groups viewing the complete video. Questions can be asked separately or altogether; Either at specific points during the video - stopping the broadcast to engage viewers - or at the conclusion of watching the video.

There is no right or wrong way to watch the video and engage with its meaning. Selichot B'Yachad is designed for inclusive and diverse interpretation and experiences, taking into account the different cultures, languages, and time zones that make up our global Movement.

Let's first take care of YOU! How is your state of physical and spiritual health as we approach these Yamim Noraim?

For all that the New Year will bring, much will remain the same. How can you reflect on the ways you can bring renewal to aspects of your everyday life (family, friends, work, selfcare, your community, God)?

Recognizing one's mistakes and saying "I'm sorry" are hard things to do. If you are so moved, take a moment during or after experiencing the program, to recognize the times when you have missed the mark.

The sound of the Shofar as a wake up call implies we have been dismissive of something or someone. How can you practice listening, empathy and attentiveness?

How do you experience a sense of peoplehood with Jews from around the world, those who speak a different language and whose cultural realities differ from yours?

How can your understanding of pluralism within Judaism, model your views and actions when it comes to issues of diversity, acceptance and understanding of other human beings?

What are your wishes for this New Year?